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Speech delivered at McKay, Burnaby, 7th



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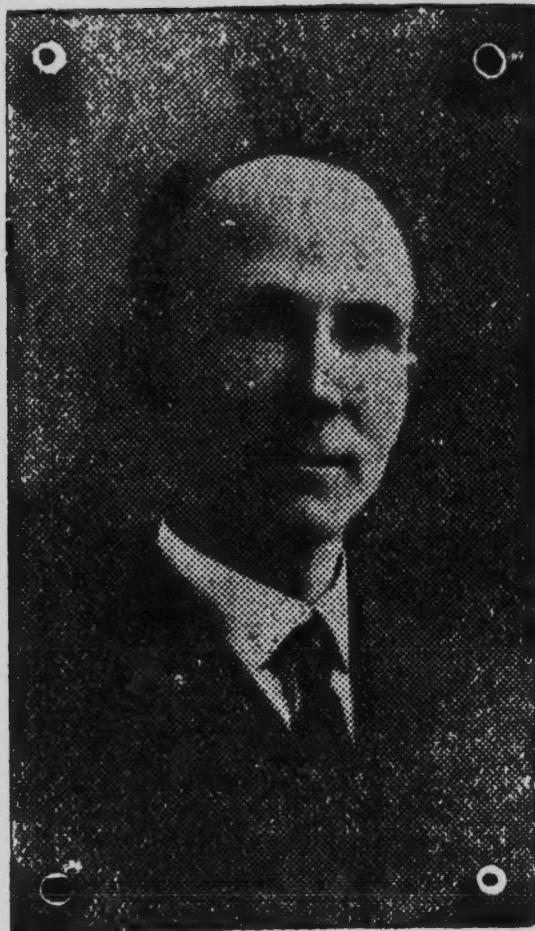
J. W. WEART

**LIBERAL CANDIDATE FOR
SOUTH VANCOUVER
CONSTITUENCY**



**Speech delivered at McKay, Burnaby
Wednesday, 7th April 1915**

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SOUTH VANCOUVER CONSTITUENCY

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Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is needless to say that it gives me pleasure to again appear before a Burnaby audience seeking your support, even under conditions which have changed since the time I had the honor of addressing you, some eight years ago, when my opponent was the Hon. Francis L. Carter-Cotton, and when this Municipality formed part of the old Richmond Riding. Now the Municipality of Burnaby and that portion of South Vancouver lying east of Fraser Avenue form a separate electoral district, called "South Vancouver," which, in point of population, will be the largest constituency represented by one member in the Province.

I am pleased to state that, at the Convention held in the Bursill Institute, I received the nomination as the Liberal Candidate to contest the District for the local legislature, and that the nomination was made unanimous on motion of His Worship Reeve Fraser. Let me state, Mr. Chairman, that in all my life's experience I never saw such an orderly, businesslike, well-conducted body of men in convention, as the 130 Liberals who were delegates at that Convention, an earnest set of men, representative of the Liberal Party, meeting for a purpose and permitting no extraneous matter to enter into their deliberations.

I regret that we have not the pleasure of having Mr. Stuart Campbell, the Conservative nominee, and Mr. Neelands, the Labor nominee, at this meeting. Invitations were sent to them to be present because it was believed the electors would appreciate the privilege of seeing and hearing the different Candidates at the same time in order that the electors may more intelligently, and in fairness to themselves and the Candidates, decide for whom they wish to

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cast their ballots. I wish to state, Sir, at the outset, that during this campaign I will not make any statement that would in the slightest degree reflect upon either of my opponents—as they are both gentlemen, and as such I propose to treat them—or upon any individual member of the Government, but, in discussing public questions, it is necessary to charge the Government with sins of commission and sins of omission, and, in that sense, reference must necessarily be made to Departmental Heads, as such.

In the interests of the masses I submit, with all respect and with all earnestness, that the interests of the Labor Party at this time are allied with the Liberal cause, particularly when it is conceded that it is an utter impossibility for a Labor Candidate, as such, to win the seat, and I submit that the electors of this Constituency, when they have heard my opinion covering vital questions affecting the masses, will, in their interests, collectively and individually, give me their full support, believing that with my years of labor since 1870, coupled with my professional experience, I am peculiarly fitted to be a representative of the people.

In the first place let me state, that, in my opinion, the purpose of the Government ought to be:

- 1st. To preserve the existence of the nation.
- 2nd. To give free and fair play to its citizens and their various activities, without regard to class distinction.
- 3rd. To extend the principle at the root of the idea of nationhood — co-operation of Labor for mutual improvement.
- 4th. To control and operate public utilities, including transportation, telegraph and telephone, and all sources of fuel production, and to provide and administer education and postal service.
- 5th. To enact such laws as will effectually prevent the paralysis of trade by lockouts or strikes in the Industrial world; to elevate the posi-

tion of the worker by making it a criminal offence to engage child labor; to shorten the statutory day; to make the workers position independent by superannuation at a fixed age, thereby enlarging the field of labor; and to enlarge the principle of the law of compensation for injuries received no matter what the cause, without litigation. All of which principles are included in the Liberal Platform.

I submit, Sir, that all legislation placed upon the Statute Book, embraces one or more of the principles enumerated, and the question that the electors will have to decide is, which party will pass such Legislation as will give to them the maximum benefits flowing from that legislation. Government Ownership is nothing more or less than the "co-operative principle," as the Government is only another word for the People, or the medium through which the People act. We have today, in many countries of the World, Government or co-operative ownership of railways, telegraphs, telephones, coal mines, schools, universities, steam ship service, distribution of mails, and saving banks, and lately, England, as a temporary necessity, commandeered an immense fleet for transportation, ship-building yards, steel works, and ammunition works. She fixed the maximum insurance on shipping and cargoes. She prohibited high prices for the necessities of life. She operates the greatest benefit insurance fund in the world, some eight million of her people being directly benefited thereby, and through its means, in time, her workhouses, which have been a blot on the state for centuries, will be empty. Many cities own and operate street railways, telephones, water works, gas plants, electric power and light plants, nearly all are profitable, the profits flowing to the treasury and reducing taxation by their amount. Why cannot this principle be extended? Is there any chance of the Government of British Columbia advancing legis-

lation along these lines? Let me state that in my opinion there is one industry the Government could co-operate in, the Government could own, control and operate the hydro-electric power in the Province of British Columbia, bringing the power to all centres of population, creating new centres of population adjacent to power plants; and giving to the manufacturer and individual power at minimum cost, thereby fostering industry, giving employment to the people, and making a contented and happy population to the elevation of mankind.

LAND ADMINISTRATION

Much has been said from the public platform, and much has been written, concerning the policy of the administration of land by the present Government. It has been charged freely that millions of acres of land have been acquired by speculators who have not paid the purchase money, the interest or the taxes, and who are not required to pay their money until six months after the war. Let us look at a few facts before us. I have before me a copy of a speech made by the Hon. Wm. R. Ross, Minister of Lands, in the Legislature, on the 29th January, 1915, which has been printed in pamphlet form and circulated throughout the province with the intent, no doubt, of using it in defence of the Government in its Land Administration. On page 3 of this pamphlet we are told that there are nine millions of dollars in arrears on account of land sales, and three millions of dollars in arrears on account of Townsite sales, which, with interest in arrears, amounts to over twelve and a half million dollars.

We are also told on page 5 of the pamphlet that there are 2,500,000 acres of land, in what is therein called the Railway Belt, remaining unsurveyed, and that the greater portion of this area is absolutely reserved for pre-emptors. Let us analyze these figures. The Hon. Minister of Lands states that the total land sales in the past ten years aggregate

5,250,000 acres, and to meet the charges, made by the Liberals, that the richest land along the line of Railways has been sold to speculators, he cites the following facts:—There are three railways mentioned, the Grand Trunk Pacific having a mileage from Prince Rupert to the Yellowhead Pass of 660 miles; the Pacific and Great Eastern, 371 miles; the Canadian Northern in the northern portion of British Columbia, 173 miles, making a total of 1204 miles. The Hon. gentleman, to build up his case, says that taking three miles on each side of these railway lines would form an area contiguous to the railway, making a belt 1200 miles long and six miles wide, which would give 4,500,000 acres contiguous to the railways.

The Hon. gentleman states that, of the 5,250,000 acres sold during the past ten years, only 847,784 acres lie within the Railway belt aforesaid. He further states that they have issued 2,400 pre-emptions within the Railway belt, which, if at 160 acres each, would account for a further 384,000 acres. He further states that there is now surveyed and ready for pre-emption a further 375,000 acres. There are, within this belt, timber limits to the extent of 137,000 acres and 59,000 acres as a University land grant, making a total of 1,802,783 acres within this belt, leaving the 2,500,000 acres which the Hon. Gentleman says is now open for pre-emption and would make homes for 15,000 people. Are we to believe that for three miles on each side of the above three railways for the full length of 1200 miles we have arable lands? Is it not a fact that not 40 per cent. of the mileage contains arable lands? From Prince Rupert to Hazelton, 185 miles, there is not an acre of arable land. Any one conversant with the topography of British Columbia well knows there is no such continuous extent of what is considered arable land in any portion of British Columbia, but rather that 60 per cent. or more is of a mountainous character and not in the slightest sense arable land. If that be a

fact, and I believe it to be a fact, and I am advised by engineers who have been over these lines that it is a fact, then it follows that the first lands sold or reserved would be the best lands and that the 2,500,000 acres spoken of by the Minister as arable land, being over half of the total, is utterly unfit for cultivation, and the Hon. Gentleman's statement was made for a purpose, with the full knowledge of the facts, and was intended to deceive the electorate.

In connection with this vast area of land sold, one would naturally think the taxes at least would be paid. I have before me a copy of the Budget Speech of the Hon. Minister of Finance delivered on February 4th, 1913, which shows the receipts for the fiscal year 1912. In turning to page 4 of that speech, I find an entry that \$428,274.70 is the total amount of taxes received as the "Land Taxes (all kinds)." Remember that in the Province of British Columbia we have a very small area indeed under Municipal control, and that the major portion of this vast Provincial area is under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Government (which has collected taxes from every acre since it became a Province), lying within the unorganized district. That total amount of taxes received, included, no doubt, according to the Report, taxes on such lands as D.L. 301, and Hastings Townsite, which were not in municipalities, and all other lands of the same nature in the Province, yet, taking the 4,400,000 acres sold prior to 1913, at a nominal value of \$2.50 per acre, at 4 per cent., (the wild land tax) we ought to have received from this source alone taxes equal to \$440,000. Nevertheless, the total receipts from the Province for "Land taxes (all kinds)" according to the Report of the Minister of Finance is only \$428,274. Is not this conclusive evidence that there must be a vast amount of money owing to the Province on these sold lands, on which at least twelve million dollars in principal is still owing. Do you consider that your Trustees, your representatives in the Legislature are properly ad-

ministering your Estate? Are you satisfied with such administration? Would you be contented if a manager of your business administered your business in like manner?

TIMBER LANDS

As lumbering is one of the chief industries of this Province, all legislation should be framed so that those who are engaged in that industry within the Province should be encouraged and protected.

In 1903, when the present administration came into power, Timber leases were issued annually. The Government was then in such a position that, when the timber of the country increased in value, as it has increased in value, and as it is bound to increase in value because of the lessening quantity of timber throughout the world, it could increase the price of this timber without in any way affecting the mill owner, and thereby receive a just and an increasing revenue from one of its principal resources for the maintenance of the country. In 1904 the Government extended the life of licenses to five years, and during the next two years enormous amounts of timber limits were staked and licenses issued therefor. From various portions of the world came shrewd business men, who knew that the time was fast approaching when B. C. timber would command a high price in the timber markets of the world. They were prepared to invest largely and did invest largely in the timber wealth of the Province. No doubt those who had become active in the operation of the sale of timber saw that, by extending the life of the license to a greater term, the value of timber on the stump must necessarily increase. Pressure was brought to bear on the Government to that end, so that the Government did, in the Session of 1906, extend the life of a timber license to the term of twenty-one years. What happened before the end of December, 1907? Some ten million acres of timber land were under license. The Minister of Lands stated that the time

that would be necessary to survey this vast tract would be until the year 1918. It was also estimated that, with the capacity of the mills of B. C. in 1907, it would take 100 years to cut the timber from off this vast tract covered by license, and it was said that, in order to prevent the indiscriminate waste bound to ensue in the race to take off the cream of the timber within the life of the license, the Government was in self-defence bound to and did agree to give renewable leases in perpetuity. It is estimated that some 80 per cent of the total timber area of British Columbia has become alienated, and when the Government claims to have received a fair annual royalty therefor, I submit that the royalty received is a bagatelle, compared with the income the Government could have received had it held under its control timber that cannot possibly be cut during the lifetime of any living person today within the Province, an income, increasing from year to year, that ought to be sufficient to largely make up the annual budget for the government of the country and its development. I ask you as fair-minded business men, and those of you who are not business men, as fair minded citizens, to consider for yourselves whether your trustees, your representatives in the Legislature, have conscientiously administered this portion of your estate to your best interests and to your children's best interests.

I am of the opinion that, as these licenses have been obtained and are held legally, it is not within the power of the legislature to take from the owners thereof that which they now enjoy, as the legislature, the same as an individual, must sacredly live up to and abide by any agreement that it has made, unless fraud is shown to have been a factor in obtaining that agreement. I am free to say, however, that in any case where alien holders of these licenses have obtained these lands under color of fraud, or do not loyally live up to the contract entered into, I would raise my voice and urge that such licenses be

immediately cancelled so that the land and the wealth represented thereby could revert to the people.

LAND SETTLEMENT

Mr. Chairman, I would ask if, in the opinion of any fair-minded man in this audience, the Government for the past twelve years has made any honest endeavor to settle the rich valley lands of the Province? I claim that there is no evidence that such endeavor has been made. No endeavor has been made in British Columbia by the Government to institute any legislation which would be of assistance to the agriculturist, enabling him to bring the lands of the Province under cultivation, and make them productive, thereby retaining within the Province the millions which are flowing out of the Province annually for food stuffs that ought to be produced within the Province.

Let me for a moment turn to the Budget speech for 1912. By the insert at page 12 is shown a comparative table of the products of the soil for 1910, 1911 and 1912 for home production, imported from Canadian provinces and imported from points outside of Canada. Dairy products, home production, decreased \$1,270,000 from 1911, and \$625,000 from 1910. Meats decreased \$240,000 from 1911, and \$270,000 from 1910. Fruit and vegetables decreased \$2,113,000 from 1911. From the returns it would appear that we did not import from the Canadian Provinces or from any other country any bacon or ham, but we did import \$447,569.00 of mutton and lamb. Can you account for the vast quantity of bacon and ham, of the American brand, that is consumed in British Columbia? Are the returns as accurate in other respects as in this item? How much confidence can be placed in such report? We do not appear to have imported any vegetables in 1912, or any beef cattle. Is it not a fact that large quantities of vegetables are imported from the United States? Verily, this report is an accurate report. The re-

turns show, however, that we imported in 1912 fifteen and a quarter millions of dollars of products of the soil, of this amount \$5,850,000 was from points outside of Canada upon which, at 30 per cent. duty, the consumers would have paid \$1,755,000 in taxes, which equals \$4.00 a head of a population of less than half a million. And we have been paying this import tax for years. This duty or tax, payable by the people, in a few years would make the valley lands laugh with riches. What think you?

To my knowledge, for the past fifteen years innumerable letters have been written to the press advocating, and on many occasions from the platform it has been advocated, that the Government bring in some measure for cheap money for the agriculturist. To my knowledge Mr. Thos. Kidd, ex-M.P.P. for Richmond, as Chairman of a Commission, did report to the Legislature a measure which, in the opinion of the Commission some years ago, would meet the crying need of cheap money for the farmers. At various times the Farmers' Institutes of the Province have passed resolutions along these lines. We are told by Mr. Lucas, a member of the Legislature, in his speech of the 17th December, 1914, delivered in the Commercial Club, Vancouver, before the Canadian Credit Mens' Association, that the Government's answer had always been that it would be useless to place people in the valleys of B.C. scattered as they are and widely separated by ranges of mountains without means of transportation. Mr. Lucas stated that about three years ago when the Farmers' Institutes met in Victoria a resolution was passed asking the Government to appoint a Commission to enquire into all questions affecting the agriculturist's interests in this Province. Mr. Lucas further states that a commission was appointed and that he was a member of that commission, and that they spent several months travelling over the face of the earth in search of some scheme that would be applicable to the conditions prevailing here. He commended to the Government the New Zealand Act, which had

been in force eighteen years and no doubt was known to the Government. This commission cost the country some \$48,000. In the settled portions of British Columbia, in the valleys of the Okanagan and Kootenay, the Fraser Valley, the Squamish Valley and a number of other points, settlement has been had for years. It is well known that from Ladner to Chilliwack numbers of homesteads were abandoned because the farmers could not acquire sufficient capital to place their holdings under cultivation, and in many cases, where loans were obtained at a high rate of interest, the mortgagees foreclosed because the farmers were unable to meet the principal at maturity, they having no other source of income than the products of the soil. If a measure for cheap money could have been brought in fifteen years ago, or at any time subsequent, then, according to Mr. Lucas's report, that valley at least ought to have shown the benefit flowing from some such an act. Under the New Zealand Act, in eighteen years the Commission loaned \$65,000,000 of money. The rate of interest is 1 per cent. more than the Government Bonds sold for. The loans are for a period of some 36 years; 1 per cent. repayable annually on account of principal, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, with a loan in larger proportion to the value of the property than could be obtained from the ordinary loan company, thus enabling the farmers of New Zealand to get their holdings in a sufficiently yielding state to pay off the above charge. What action has the B. C. Government taken on the report of the Commission? It has brought in an Act, a copy of the Bill I have with me, being No. 72, but the Government was not inclined to give this bill its third reading until it received just protests from Mr. Lucas and other members of the Commission. The Government then gave it its third reading but it has not become law. Section 159 states that "It shall come into force on such day as shall be fixed by Order-of-Council." Mr. Lucas states in his speech that the New Zealand Act was

"Independent of the Government." What about the B. C. Act? By section 4, "The Agriculture Credit Commission is created." It consists of five directors, one of whom is styled a superintendent, who shall be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. According to section 5, two other directors are to be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, and they shall hold office for ten years unless sooner removed for cause, but it is provided that these two directors must have been engaged in the occupation of farming in the Province of British Columbia, or they will not be eligible for this position. Who are the other two directors? Section 7 states that the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Deputy Minister of Agriculture shall ex officio be directors. One would have thought, Mr. Chairman, that the directors, holding such an important position, responsible to the people for the investment of vast sums of money, should be the keenest business men that could be chosen, men who have proven their worth, men who have during their business career run across the sharper and are prepared to treat such individuals as they deserve. It is generally conceded that the farmers of any country are, as a body, as honorable as, or more honorable probably than, any other body of men; that is to say, that, from their very life and occupation, living close to nature, not coming into contact with the rogues, defaulters and others that the business fraternity continually meet, they would be less apt to question the bona fides of any sharper applicant before them. One would think, Mr. Chairman, such a body of directors would at least have the power, and would be credited with sufficient good judgment, to engage such staff of assistants as they from time to time required to carry out the provisions of the Act. One would think, also, Mr. Chairman, that a Board of Directors holding such an important position, handling millions of the people's money, would at least have the power to say what remuneration the various members of its staff would

receive. What does the Act say? Section 10 says that the Commission **may**, with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, appoint such persons as may be required for the transaction of its business, but such appointees **shall** be under the direct control of the **superintendent**, not under the control of the directors who constitute the Commission. Section 12 provides that the remuneration payable to the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Office staff, Appraisers, and all other appointees shall be determined by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. What are these directors intended to do? The control of the staff being with the superintendent, two of the directors being deputy ministers of the Crown, being residents at the Capital, who ought not to be burdened with the business of the Commission, does it not necessarily follow, if the Commission meets regularly to transact its business, that, in order to constitute a full Board, the meetings must be held in Victoria, and in that case, in order to avoid extra expense, the two farmer directors must also live there. I submit, with all respect, that no capable man who has had business training—and none should be in that position unless he has had business training—would accept office as a director, not having a voice in the control of the staff, not having a voice in nominating the appointees and not having power to fix the remuneration for services, being, in fact, a dummy. It can readily be seen that it would be a miracle if the operations of the Act proved profitable, when so much power is placed with the Government and with the Superintendent. Does it not suggest to you that this Act is, or could be made, the smoothest and best oiled political machine, a fit associate with the other well-oiled political machines in operation in this province by the present government?

COMPENSATION FOR INJURY

An injured workman has a right to bring an action for damages for negligence against his employer

either at Common Law or under the "Employers' Liability Act," but to succeed he must prove negligence of the employer himself or his system, plant or equipment. A lawsuit is an expensive thing at best and as but a few who are injured succeed in such an action it was deemed just that a further measure of relief be given the workmen, which was given in the "Workmen's Compensation Act," its object being to insure the workman against loss caused by injuries which might happen to him whilst engaged in his work, quite irrespective of whether or not the employer of the workman was to blame, with certain exceptions. One great defect in this Act is that it only extends to certain specified cases of employment, and the amount of damages recoverable thereunder is limited.

It is true that the Government has at this session brought in an Act the scope of which is limited to certain trades or occupations, but which is an improvement on the old Act, but it has not yet become law. It has not yet been considered that you are entitled to benefit from this Act. However, it is almost a copy of the Act passed in Ontario in 1914, which came into force January 1915, and which, during its two months of operation, according to the reports, has been giving the greatest of satisfaction. The Ontario Act provides for remuneration to the worker in certain trades who is injured when he has been seven days incapacitated, not so the B. C. Act, which provides that fourteen days must elapse before the benefit can be received—that is to say—that in the eyes of the Government of British Columbia the workers here are able to sustain life for double the length of time that their brethren in Ontario can without any compensation. The Act to be of benefit should extend to and include all trades and occupations.

Time will not admit of my going into this Act in detail, but suffice it to say that the Ontario Act provides that the remuneration payable to the injured

is 55 per cent. of his then earning power until he has recovered. In the case of his death, his wife is paid \$20.00 per month during her lifetime, and \$10.00 per month for each child living under age. In the event of the widow marrying, she is paid a sum in lieu of her monthly annuity equal to 2½ years' instalments.

It is a well-known fact that there are few, if any, companies operating that pay larger dividends to their shareholders than the Accident Insurance Companies, and the profits, agents' fees, and general expenses of such companies would insure labor in all walks of life. The Government of British Columbia from time to time has attempted to give some measure of relief to the workers, but has not yet deemed it necessary to place on the Statute Books a law that will recognize the right of the workers in all walks of life to just compensation for injury received, no matter what the cause, and without litigation.

As the Nation is comprised of individual units, who by their labor produce the wealth of the world, which should enable them when they have reached a certain age to retire from working, he that is justly to be recognized by the State as such a unit is entitled to enjoy his remaining years of life in comparative ease. If he is fortunate enough to have a savings account, so much the better. As no sane individual would deliberately run the chance of being marred for life because of his right to remuneration, it must be recognized that every injury received is the result of accident and that the unfortunate one ought to be recompensed because he has been a unit of the State.

To my mind half measures which mitigate but do not remove injustice are to be avoided. It would be a great mistake if such questions were to be determined, not by consideration of what is just to the workers but by what is the least with which they can be put off with. May the day speedily come when a full measure of justice will be meted out to all, irrespective of their employment. If it is within my

power, either with the Government or with the Opposition, when I am elected, and I believe I will be elected. I will urge placing upon the Statutes such measures as will insure to the masses their just rights, for, as Macready has said, "If every just man that now pines with want had such a moderate and befitting share of that which pampered luxury now heaps upon some few with vast excess, Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed."

THE MINING INDUSTRY

It will be conceded that the Mining Industry ought to be one of the greatest, if not the greatest, industry of British Columbia, and while the mineral output for the past ten years has doubled, that is not a tithe to what the output should be if the industry had been properly fostered, and encouragement given to the prospector, with a view of opening up the country. As the prospecting stage is the initial stage of development, anything that will retard prospecting or work hardship on the prospector ought to be discouraged, and anything that will encourage the prospector to get into the hills and to encourage the miner in his attempt to develop his prospect should be encouraged.

To my mind the system of allowing recorded owners of mining claims to hold the same from year to year by obtaining a certificate of work, or declaration that he has spent \$100 in the year on or adjacent to the claim, is a system that should be discontinued, as it is a well-known fact that in a large majority of cases the money so spent to obtain the certificate of work has not been judiciously spent, with a view of determining the value of the ground. But that the recorded owner should be compelled, annually, to tunnel at least 10 feet, or sink at least 10 feet, or in the case of an open cut, to remove a given quantity of rock, and this certificate of work should be based upon his affidavit to this effect, and if it is shown by any subsequent locator that this work has not been

done, then the ground will become immediately vacant, and subject to re-letting. This may appear to be a drastic measure, but if the claim is not of sufficient value to warrant work being done of this kind, no matter what the cost, which is for the benefit of the owner, the quicker the owner abandons his claim the better it will be for him, and if it proves valuable, it is all the better for him.

In what way can the Government encourage the Mining Industry? This question has been asked a number of times, and if I may suggest, the Government could in the first instance abolish the Free Miners' License (save as to Companies), establish a custom smelter, at some point on the coast, so that all small miners and prospectors can take his ores to be treated and get smelter returns, and in connection with the custom smelter the Government could maintain an experimental plant with a view to solving the zinc problem, and an assay office where any prospector could have his ore tested without charge, abolish all taxes from mining properties until they had shipped 100 tons, all of which would encourage the prospector and miner in his endeavor to get his claim opened up to prove its worth. Also maintain a force of competent field men whose duties will be to visit the various properties throughout the Province; reporting on them to the Department of Mines, and advising the prospector. These reports to be published annually or semiannually, for the general information of the public as well as the intending investor. This should be a good preventive for wild-catting, and at the same time have the effect of bringing promising prospects prominently before the public. Also to maintain stations where the prospector can secure the use of a diamond drill at cost with which to prospect his property.

With such encouragement and assistance to the prospector, and the information concerning prospects given to the probable investor, conditions ought to rapidly improve.

Sir, it is possible that some of the electors may take exception to my statements as to the gross lack of business administration by the Government. I have here a copy of the "Western Call," a paper owned and published by Mr. H. H. Stevens, Dominion Member for Vancouver. This issue is dated Friday, the 2nd April, 1915. On the front page is a leader, "The Wealth of the Province," written no doubt with a full knowledge of its import. It says in part:

"The Government holds the wealth in trust for the people.

"Now every election decides whether the same trustees shall be re-elected or whether there shall be a change of trustees. The election should turn a great deal upon how the trustees have handled the public domain.. Has that handling shown a fair profit, or has it shown a loss. Has the domain been handled for private gain?

"But as a question of political economy we are of the opinion that the system inherited by the Government and by them carried on with few changes is a vicious system. . . .

"The great communal wealth of the province has been and is being changed rapidly into private wealth. We cannot emphasize this too strongly. A transmutation of public wealth into private wealth without a quid pro quo is vicious.. Take our coal lands. The ownership of the coal beds should remain forever in the hands of the people. The cost of the development should be borne by the Government, for it is important that the beds should be developed. The working of the mines might then be done by private enterprise, under lease and on a percentage basis. But the alienating of the lands forever, whether worked or not, should not be allowed.

"Socialism, says some one. Not at all, only common-sense political economy. It is time we had done with the madness of giving away the people's wealth. It is time we had done with the assinine policy of

building railroads and then giving them away to private concerns.

"We do not hesitate to say that if they were to set their mind to it, out of the wealth of the Province there could be secured profits for the people by this Government which would obviate the necessity of provincial taxation at all and a handsome balance in the treasury besides."

Not the choicest English, but I cheerfully endorse every principle in that editorial and I am of the opinion that the writer may be severely reprimanded by Mr. Stevens or Sir Richard for writing such an article. At heart he must be a Liberal or at least a radical Conservative. May I ask what system has been inherited by the Government which is a vicious system? Were any of the Governments of the Province, prior to 1903, prodigal in the use of the resources of the Province? If so, has it taken 12 years to discover it? But the Government has not admitted it, on the contrary the Hon. Minister of Lands, in his speech of the 29th January last, declines to apologise for the land policy of the Government but says he is a firm believer in that policy, that policy which the "Western Call" says is a vicious system.

What do you make of it Are you satisfied?

I now charge the Government with having bartered away the resources of the country without any just compensating advantage. I charge the Government with having impaired the credit of the Province with extravagant grants in millions of money and bond guarantees to railroads to a greater extent than the cost of the railroads. I charge the Government with the following sins of omission:

It has not safe-guarded the people's interests sufficiently in acts and agreements with railway corporations, and particularly it has not retained power to cross lines, control freight rates and passenger rates or control increase of capital or bond issues.

It has made no effort to create a labor bureau as a clearing house for labor's demand and supply.

It has made no effort to institute public works to care for the unemployed, who have become so by the collapse of the land boom (as to which the Government was a chief offender) or through the effects of the war.

It has failed for twelve years to place on the Statutes any measures calculated to elevate the position of the masses.

It has refused to pass a Dower Act, which would give to the wife a one-third interest in lands registered in the husband's name.

It has made many attempts to pass laws for protection of the worker in case of accident, but has yet failed to realize or admit the necessity of a law to give just compensation for injuries received from any cause without litigation.

It has not made any honest endeavor to encourage settlers on our rich valley lands.

It has not kept faith with the public in not retaining a portion of every area of coal lands leased or sold.

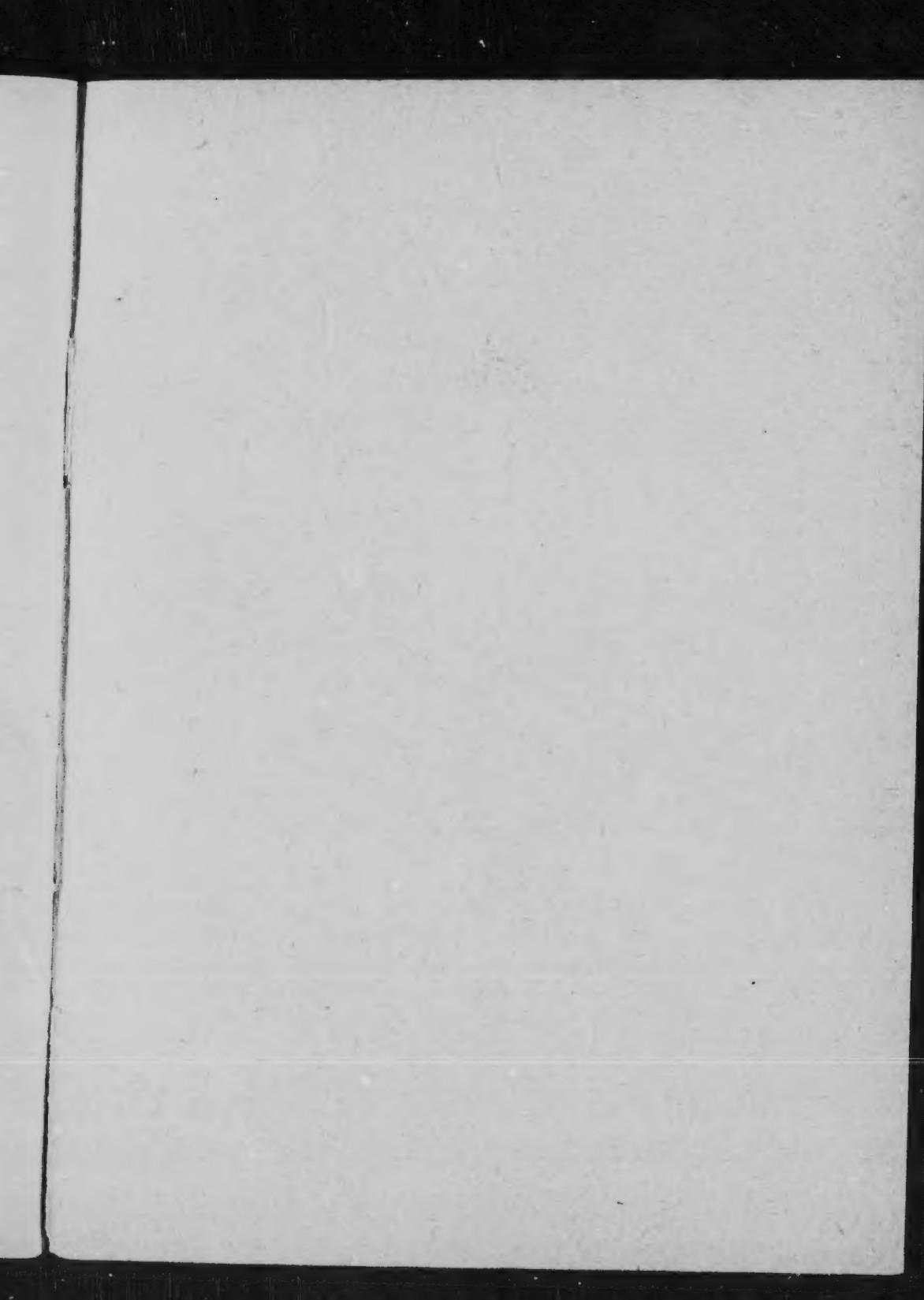
It has not yet brought into force the "Agricultural Credit Act."

It has turned a deaf ear to the judgments of the Supreme Court of British Columbia and the Supreme Court of Canada as to frauds on the Land Act.

It has permitted Trust Companies to operate in violation of the law.

It has refused to allow the City and South Vancouver to join hands to their mutual advantage.

You are the electors. To you is entrusted the privilege of choosing the law makers. It is a trust for the good of others, and upon the right or wrong exercise of that trust depends the fulfillment of your hopes. At the coming election you will be entitled to choose between men offering themselves as candidates. You must in your own interests choose the one who is more likely to provide legislation that will mitigate the evils now existing.



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